

Augusta Ga
April 16th 1878
William Lloyd Garrison Esq
Boston Mass

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Dear Sir:

I have known
your name and been familiar with
your labor and utterances from my
youth but not having a personal
acquaintance with you I will
have to write you a long letter to
introduce myself and to state my
purpose in thus intruding upon
your attention. I am a Colored
man, was born the slave of my
father in South Carolina in 1845.
At an early age through the exertions
of my mother I was sent to the
North where I was attending school
when the war commenced in 1861

When Mr Lincoln made his first appeal for troops to preserve the republic in its integrity, I ran away from school and volunteered as a soldier, my complexion precluding the possibility of a discovery of my race status, I served through the entire Contest from May 1861 until July 1865 and at the age of nineteen had attained to the rank of Captain being perhaps the only Colored man except Crispus Attucks that ever commanded a company of white soldiers in actual battle in this country.

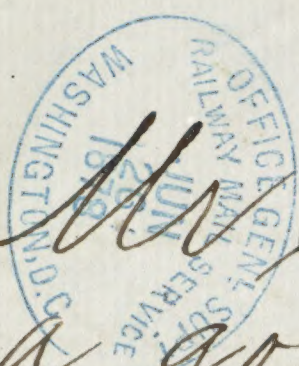
I was twice wounded and was confined four months in a Confederate prison. When the war commenced I knew that Slavery was its Cause and that the North by reason of its superiority in material and resources would "whip the fight" and as a sensible people would on

ought to remove the disturbing element.
I knew that numbers like Helper did
not object to Slavery per se but was
opposed to it because it conflicted with
some interest and would add their
influence in creating a sentiment
favorable to its extermination.

I remained in the ranks until
the rebellion was overthrown and
my race released from bondage.

At the close of the war I settled
in this State and have been engaged
in various employments being at
present a Railway Post Office Clerk.

My purpose in writing to you
is to invoke your influence
in securing for me a transfer
to some section of the Country
where I can by industry and
manly exertion become something
more than a "Mere Nigger." A transfer
to some line in New England or
the far west would suit me. When

Mr Sumner was living I had
a good & dear friend that never
hesitated to serve me. I have no
such a friend now and I have
after careful reflection addressed
this letter to you the best known
and oldest abolitionist and humani-
tarian in the country. Mr Theo N
Vail Genl Supt Railway Mail Service
Washington DC is the proper one to
apply to. Hoping that you may
see proper to aid me in the manner
I have indicated & favor me with
an early reply I have the honor to
subscribe myself with great respect

Your obt servant
Edwin Belcher

